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ABSTRACT

Background information, legends, games, illustrations, and art projects are provided in this booklet introducing elementary students to the history and culture of Indian tribes of the North Pacific Coast and Pacific Northwest. One in a series of Native American instructional materials, the booklet provides an overview of the coastal culture area, as well as, information about specific tribal customs. Written in simple language, the topics include the climate of the region, the abundance of food and natural resources, the importance of salmon fishing, typical shelters, traditional celebrations, the Chinook legend of creation, the Chinook Jargon used as the language of trade between Pacific Northwest tribes and non-Indians, the uses of the red cedar tree, and the significance of the totem pole. Directions and patterns are provided for three model construction projects: a coastal long house, a totem pole, and a crooked-beak-of-heaven mask of the Kwakiutl people. Additional student activities include writing the history represented by a totem pole and learning the traditional games of slahal (bone game) and fish trap. Evaluation questions assess the students' ability to describe the culture of the coastal Indians and compare it with the woodland, plains, and desert Indian cultures covered by other booklets in this series. The text refers to films and books containing related information. (JH)

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COASTAL CULTURE AREA

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Cathy Ross & Roger Fernandes

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- O WOODLAND CULTURE AREA
- O PLAINS CULTURE AREA
- ● COASTAL CULTURE AREA
- O DESERT CULTURE AREA
- O THE WAY IT IS TODAY

Published by
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Classroom kits containing authentic artifacts from each of the culture areas are available to accompany these books. For more information, write to CURRICULUM ASSOCIATES
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The Coastal Cultural Area extends from Southeastern Alaska along the west coast of British Columbia, through western Washington (including Puget Sound) and western Oregon and into northern California. The climate in this area is moderate, with colder weather to the north. Rainfall is plentiful and temperatures are seldom extreme.

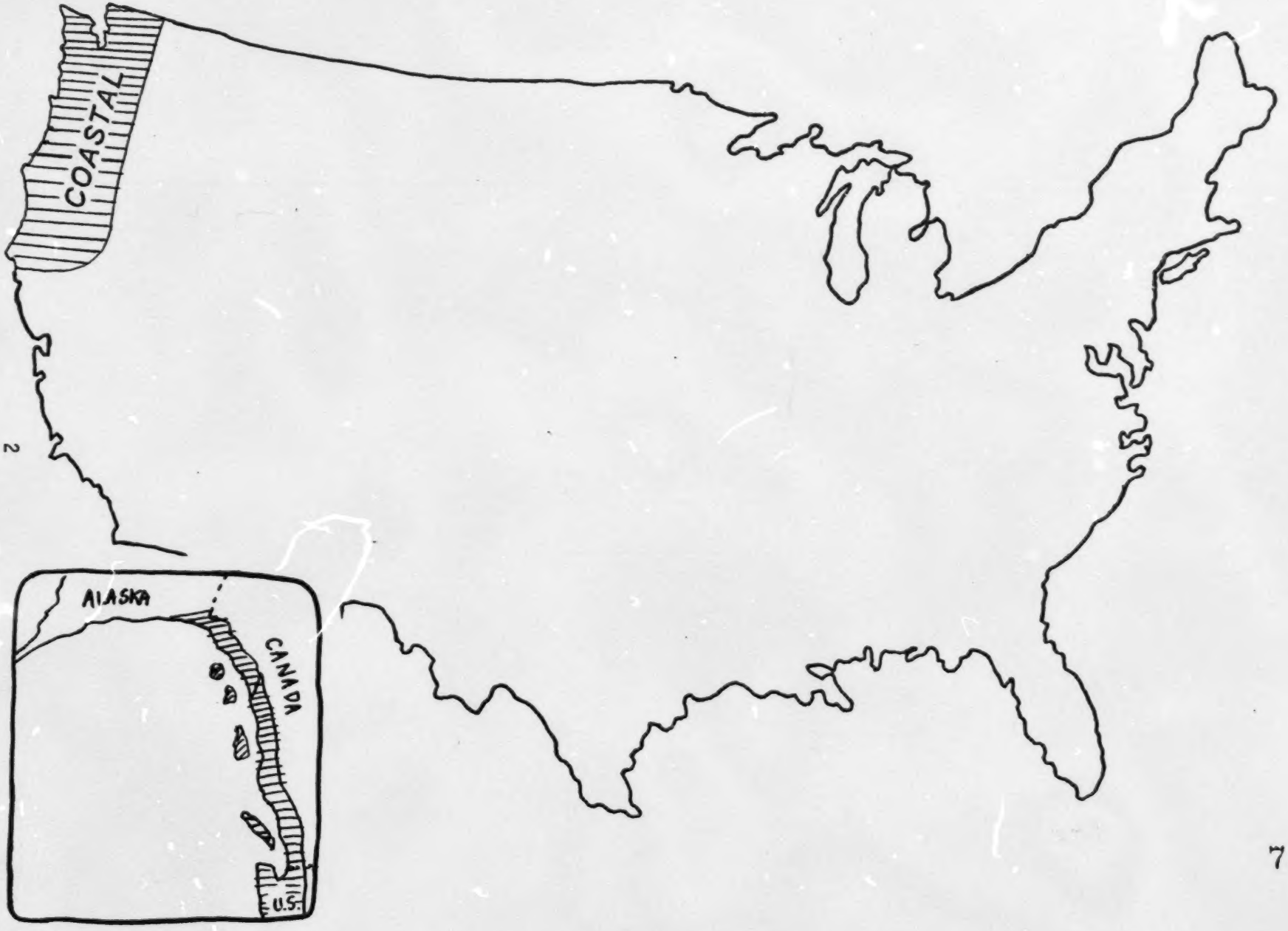
The people here were known as fishing people. Because there was an abundance of food and natural resources, their lives were fairly comfortable. Although their main food was salmon, they also caught many other kinds of fish, hunted animals in the forests, and gathered berries and roots.

Some of the tribes in this area are:

Alaska	
Tlingit	TLING-git
Haida	HY-da
Tsimshian	SIM-she-an
British Columbia	
Bella Coola	BELL-a COOL-a
Bella Bella	BELL-a BELL-a
Kwakuitl	kwak-CUE-tle
Nootka	NOOT-ka
Salish	SAY-lish
Cowichan	cuh-WEE-chin
Oregon and California	
Kalapuya	cal-a-POOH-yuh
Tillamook	TILL-a-mook
Klamath	CLAM-uth
Hupa	HOOP-a
Karok	ka-RUKE

Washington	
Lummi	LUH-mee
Skagit	SKAJ-it
Tulalip	too-LAY-lip
Duwamish	due-WAH-mish
Puyallup	pew-AL-up
Muckleshoot	MUCK-kle-shoot
Nisqually	nis-SKWAH-lee
Skokomish	skoe-KOE-mish
Suquamish	sue-KWAH-mish
Clallam	KLAL-lum
Makah	ma-KAW
Quinault	kwin-NALT
Quileute	KWILL-ee-yute
Chinook	chin-NOOK

Locate these tribes on the map included in the General Information kit. View the filmstrip "The Chinook: Fishermen of the Northwest" (Troll Associates)


COASTAL
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ALASKA
CANADA
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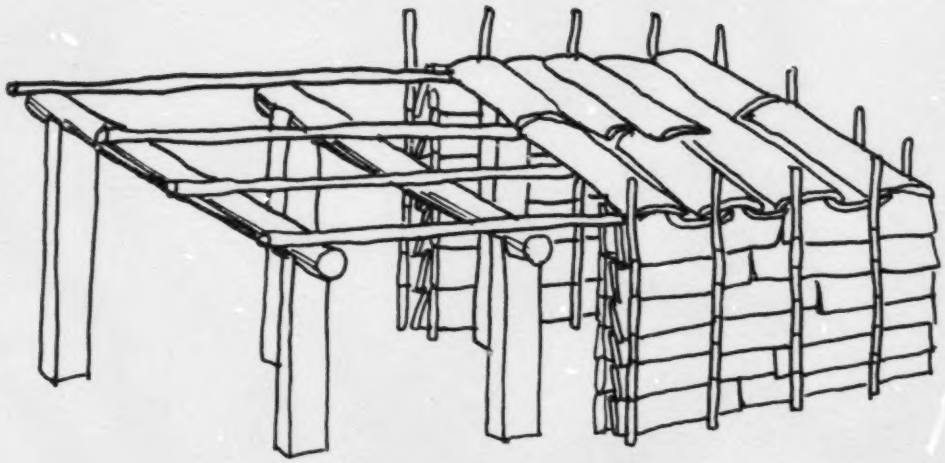
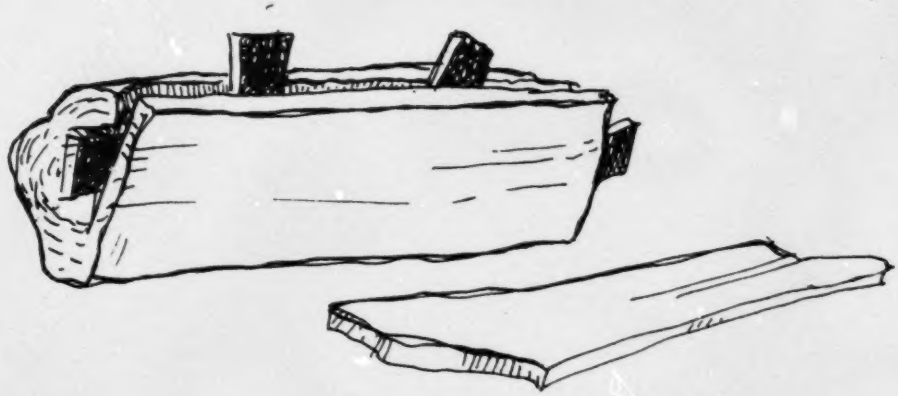
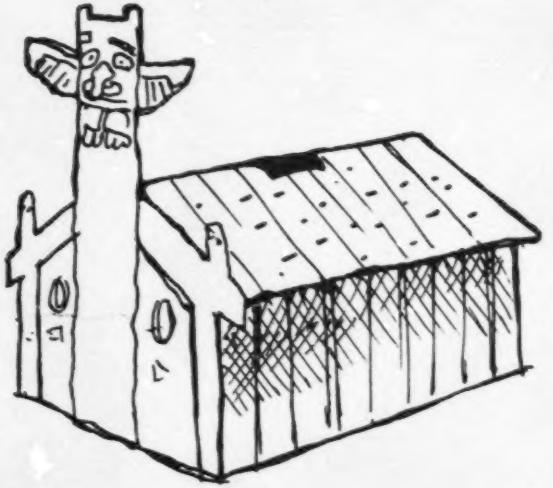


Most people of the coast culture area of the Northwest lived in longhouses or plank houses. These buildings were made of hand-split cedar planks (see illustration below) and were large enough to provide shelter for many families. Some were as big as 100 feet by 80 feet in size. These longhouses are <u>not</u> the same as the longhouse of the Iroquois people, even though they are often called by the same name. Coastal longhouses were often decorated on the outside with paintings or carvings. You can make a model of a Northwest Indian longhouse using the pattern and directions in this book.

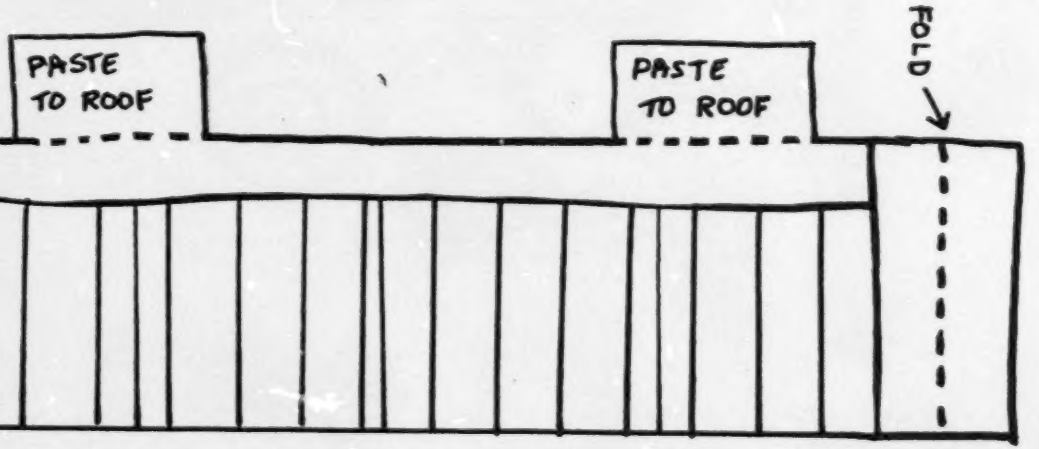


COASTAL LONGHOUSE



DIRECTIONS:

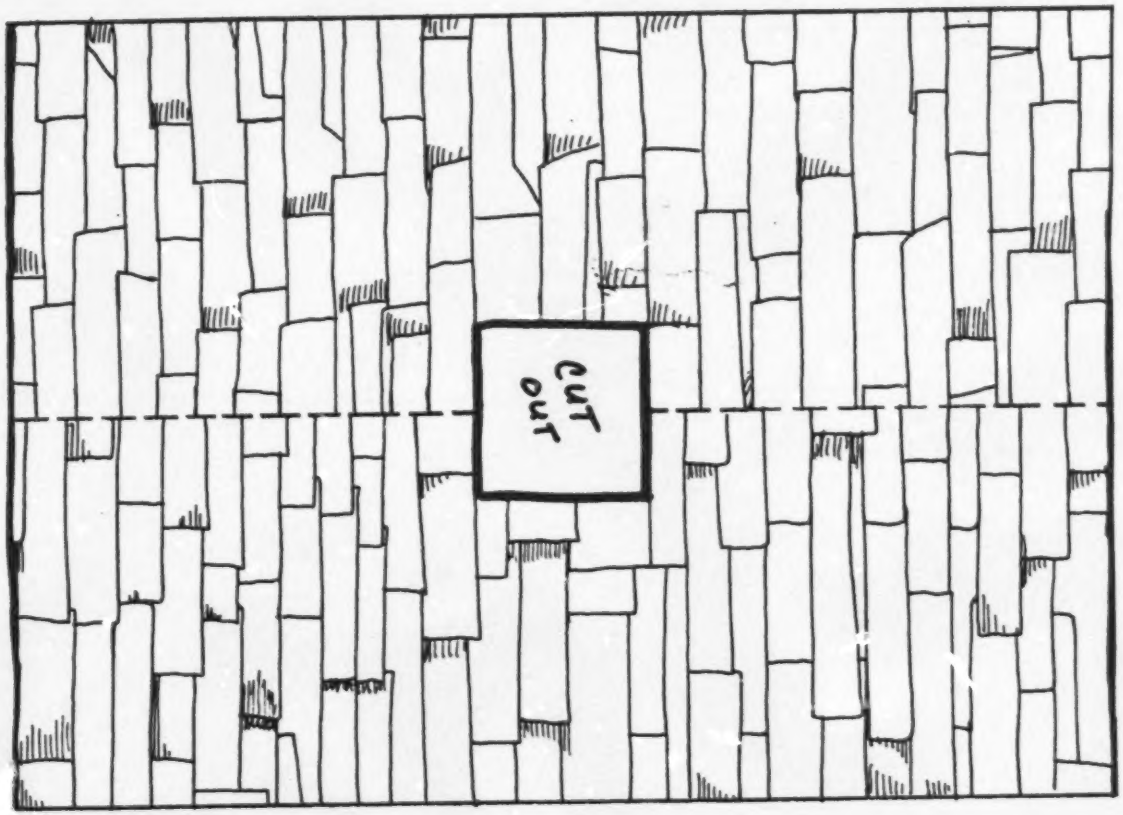
Duplicate on tagboard or construction paper.
Color the totem designs if you wish.
Cut out the two parts of the longhouse.
Fold where indicated and paste together at the corners of the house.
Fold the roof and paste it to the house, using the tabs marked "paste to roof."

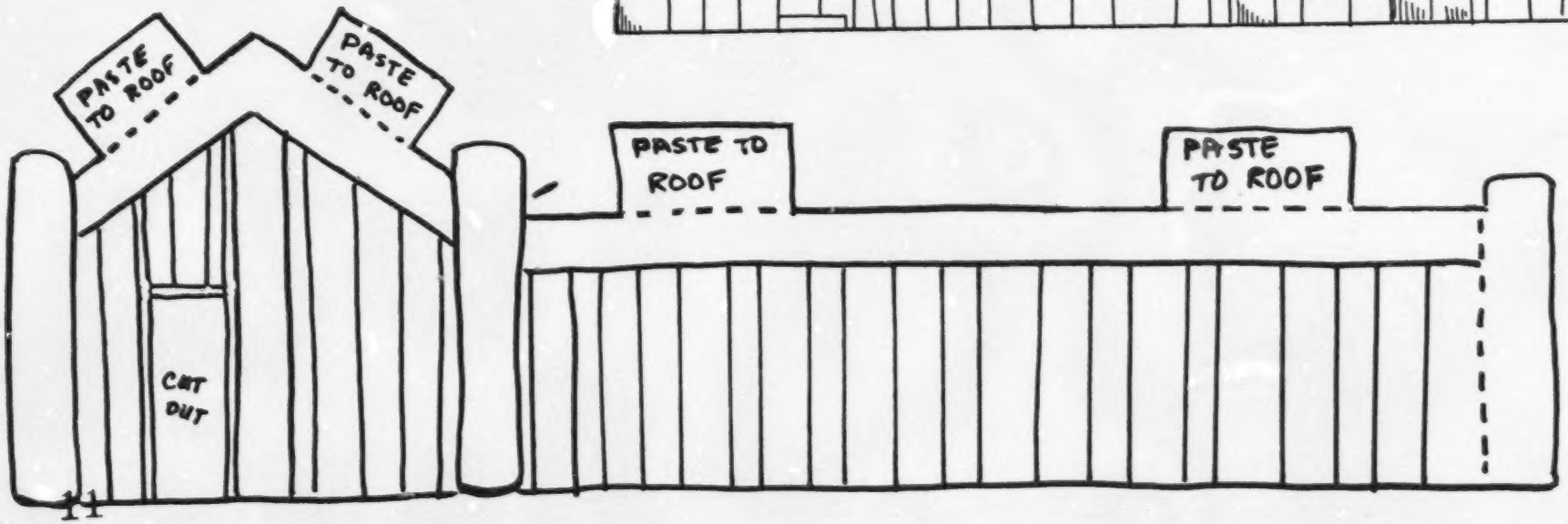


COASTAL LONGHOUSE

DUPLICATE ON TAGBOARD
OR CONSTRUCTION PAPER.
SEE OTHER PAGE FOR
DIRECTIONS.

Fold→





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This story tells about the picture on the next page. It was written by Vi Hilbert of the Upper Skagit and Nooksack tribes in Washington State.

A long time ago, this is how the homes of my ancestors looked. This was the kind of a home the father of my father had. It was located near the shore of the Skagit river. Many people lived together there because it was a very big house. I have been told that it was possibly one hundred feet long and eighty feet wide. Three large fires were made in this house. Only the fire near the entrance was used for cooking purposes. Salmon are skewered on iron-wood sticks and cooked by this fire.

Let us talk about what you see in this house. There are two mallard ducks. The woman will pluck the ducks and she will make soup of it. There are clam baskets. Clams are put there when they go clam digging. There are cedar root baskets everywhere. That is where many varieties of dried berries are put. They have a dip net leaning at the pole. They use this dip net at the river to catch fish. There is an old man telling stories to the children. They are sitting nicely and listening intently. There is a woman twirling a leg spindle. She prepares the wool of the sheep for knitting and weaving all kinds of clothing to keep the family warm. There is a woman weaving a clam basket. She has her cedar boughs soaking in the water. The woman who is sitting at the other end of the house is taking care of her two grandchildren. Their mother is out berry picking. The woman who is moving toward the center of the house has a cedar root basket filled with water. Look at the rocks near the first fire. They keep those brushed to put into the fire until they are hot. They then put them into the cedar root basket for boiling their food. There is a lot of food up above, hanging. There is dried salmon, dried meat and dried horse clams. They also dry the heads of the salmon.

Look at the cattail mats that have been made for the beds. They are also woven to be used as room dividers and protection from the cold air when hung against the walls. Animal skins are used for blankets.

This was the way my ancestors lived. The way they lived was very good. They helped each other and they knew each other. Their customs were good long ago. They shared a mutual respect for everything provided by nature and the earth. This is taq^{w}əs blu talking.

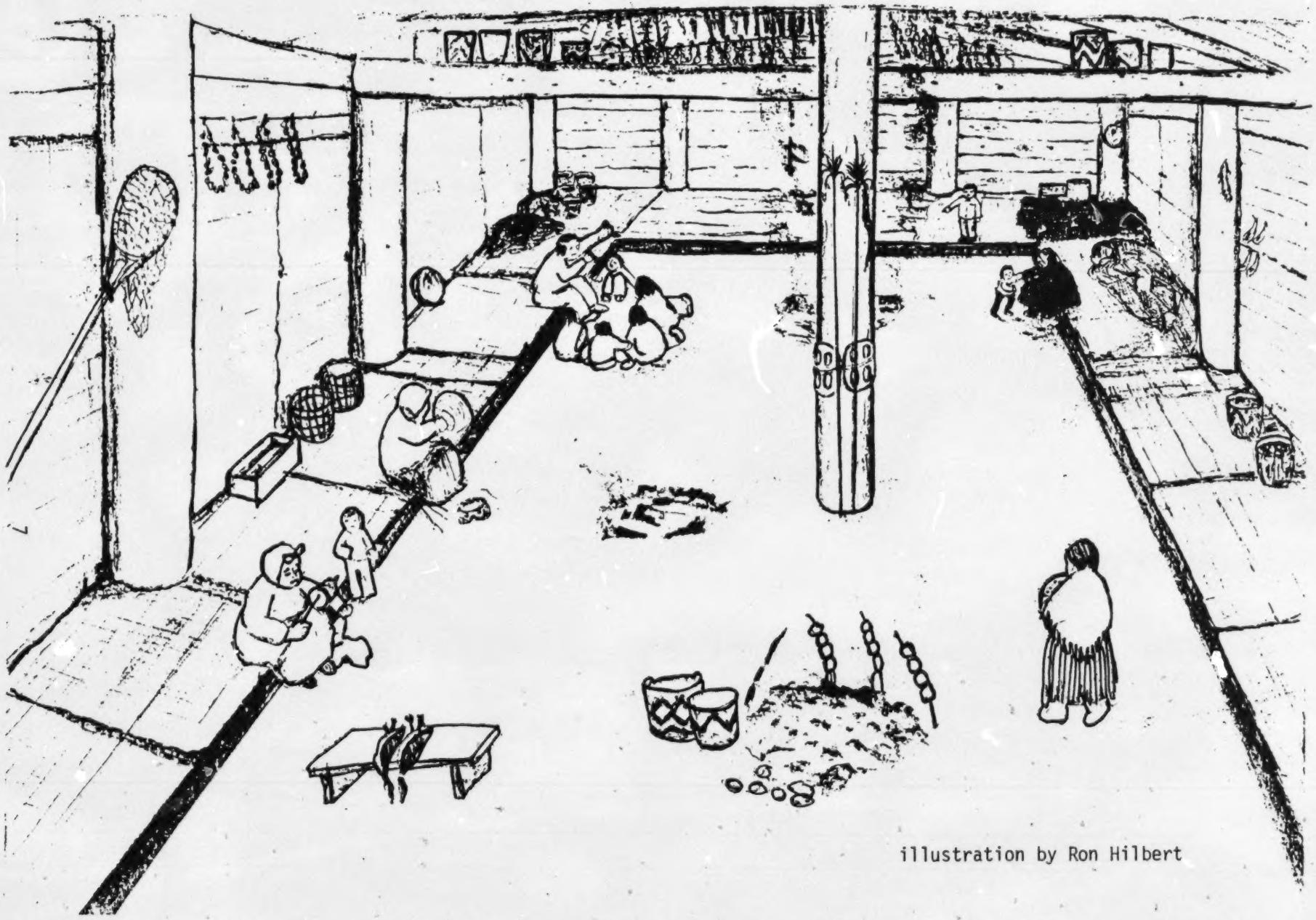

illustration by Ron Hilbert

THE INTERIOR OF A COASTAL LONGHOUSE

Before the non-Indians came to the Northwest Coast area, some of the Indians there were very wealthy. They had all the food and materials they could need for a comfortable life. A way for an important family or person to show proof of their riches and honor was to hold a potlatch. This word comes from the Chinook word "patshall" which means "gift."

A potlatch is a great feast where gifts are given to the guests. A potlatch could be given when a child in the family received his second name or when someone was getting married or for other reasons. Sometimes the person or family would save for a year to make sure they had enough blankets or canoes or tools to give away to all the guests. Sometimes the family would give away all they possessed, but they would expect to be repaid by attending potlatches put on by their guests so that they would regain what they had given away.

Honor was very important to the Northwest Coast Indians, and to keep your honor when you received gifts at a potlatch you were expected to repay the giver by putting on another potlatch and giving gifts that were of greater value than those you had received. If you didn't, you lost your honor.

When the Europeans arrived they did not approve of potlatches. They felt the Indians spent too much time preparing for the feasts and that they should learn to save things rather than give them away. In Canada the potlatches were outlawed and Indians were arrested and put in jail for holding them. Today, Indians are reviving the potlatch custom and non-Indians are more understanding of the reasons and the purpose of the potlatch.

Chinook Jargon was used as the trade language between Pacific Northwest tribes and between Indians and non-Indians for both trading and treaty settlements during the 1800's. The Jargon consisted basically of Chinook and Nootka words, with some French and English words as well. It did not have enough words to be considered a real language; that is why it was called a "jargon." Here are some words from the Chinook Jargon:

Kla-how-ya - klah HOW yah - hello and good-bye
Illahie - ILL a hee - the earth
alkĭ - AL kye - soon
Kopa - KO pa - on
Hyak - HY ack - swift, fast
Klatawah - klah TAW wah - to go
chuck - CHUCK - water
Kalakala - kah LAH kah lah - bird
nĭka - NY kah - I, me, mine, my
mĭka - MY kah - you, yours
muck-a-muck - muck a muck - to eat; food
potlatch - POT latch - to give; a gift
skookum - SKOOK come - strong
skookum tumtum - SKOOK come TUM tum - brave
tenas - TEN us - small
tillicum - TILL i come - people, friends
tyee - tie EE - chief
tum-tum - TUM tum - heart
wawa - WAH wah - to call, to tell
klale - KLAH lay - blue

Can you read this?
Klahowya tillicum! Alki nika klatawah hyak kopa chuck.

TRY TO MAKE A SENTENCE IN CHINOOK JARGON.

What kinds of problems do you see occuring by using this language for trading? What about for writing treaties? Discuss this with others in your class.

You can learn a song in Chinook Jargon that is recorded on a cassette tape that is in the kit. The song is called "Klale Kalakala."

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHINOOK INDIANS

Long, long ago, when Old Man South Wind was traveling north, he met an old woman who was a giant.

"Will you give me some food?" asked South Wind. "I am very hungry."

"I have no food," answered the giantess, "but here is a net. You can catch some fish for yourself if you wish."

So Old Man South Wind dragged the net down to the ocean and with it caught a little whale. Taking out his knife, he was about to cut the whale and take out the blubber.

But the old giantess cried out, "Do not cut it crossways. Take a sharp knife and split it down the back."

But South Wind did not take to heart what the old woman was saying. He cut the fish crossways and began to take off some blubber. He was startled to see the fish change into a huge bird. It was so big that when it flew into the air, it hid the sun, and the noise of its wings shook the earth. It was Thunderbird.

Thunderbird flew to the north and lit on the top of the Saddleback Mountain, near the mouth of the Columbia River. There it laid a nest full of eggs. The old giantess followed the bird until she found its nest. She broke one egg, but it was not good. She threw it down the mountainside. Before the egg reached the valley, it became an Indian.

The old giantess broke some other eggs and then threw them down the mountainside. They too became Indians. Each of Thunderbird's eggs became an Indian.

When Thunderbird came back and found its eggs gone, it went to South Wind. Together they tried to find the old giantess, to get revenge on her. But they never found her, although they traveled north together every year.

That is how the Chinook were created. And that is why Indians never cut the first salmon across the back. They know that if they should cut the fish the wrong way, the salmon would cease to run. Always, even to this day, they slit the first salmon down the back, lengthwise.

The first salmon ceremony was a religious celebration of the coastal people to give thanks for the return of the salmon. The coastal people held this ceremony when the first salmon was caught each year. The Lummi, Skokomish, Tulalip and Puyallup people still conduct this ceremony today. An old legend of this culture area tells how Dukwebah (DUKE we bah), the Changer, was kidnapped and held captive by the Salmon People. After his rescue, he tells the Salmon People that from that time on they must swim upstream and downstream forever. He also tells them that they will become food for the people on the shore, who will treat them with respect.

The fisherman who catches the first salmon cuts it down the back, lengthwise. The meat is cut from the bones and cooked. The head, bones, and tail are placed on leaves. The fisherman then carries the bones back to the river, followed by a procession of people. They all sing songs which tell how grateful they are for the return of the salmon and pledge that they will always show them the proper respect. When the procession reaches the river, the fisherman takes the bones to the middle of the river and carefully returns them to the water. The spirit of the salmon can then go back to the Salmon People and tell them that it is all right for the rest of the salmon to swim upstream, because the people on the shore still remember the right way to treat them. After the singing and the prayers are finished, the people return from the river and eat the salmon meat from the first salmon. The elders are served first and every person has a small bit of this sacred food.

The red cedar tree was very important to the people of the coastal culture area. They respected the tree and considered it to be like a person. They felt that each tree had a spirit which would guide a person to it when it was ready to be used.

All parts of the tree were useful. The cedar boughs were burned for fuel and also were used to make medicine. The roots were used in weaving baskets. The wood was used to carve masks, containers, rattles, totem poles, and canoes. These canoes were called "dugouts" because the wood was dug out of the center of the log to make it hollow. The outer parts of the log were carefully carved and smoothed. Cedar wood was also used to build longhouses.

The bark of the cedar tree was flexible and strong. Cedar bark could only be gathered at certain times of the year. It was carefully stripped from the tree in long sheets about eight inches wide. The people were very careful not to take all the bark, because it would kill the tree. Before stripping the bark, songs were sung thanking the tree for giving up its bark and explaining why the bark was needed. It was shredded into fine strips and used to weave baskets, hats, robes, and other clothing items. The robes were often lined with otter fur to make them warm. Large pieces of bark were sometimes used on the roofs of longhouses.

WESTERN RED CEDAR

The Northwest Coast Indians carved totem poles out of the great cedar trees in their environment. They were carved to show clan or family crests, to show historical events, grave memorials, and sometimes to represent white people the Indians had met.

Totem poles were <u>not</u> gods or demons. They were never worshipped and were not used as religious figures.

When a family or clan erected a memorial pole they were showing their coat of arms, to show their honor, and to show what rights and previleges their family had. No other family could claim this pole to be their own.

Along the Northwest Coast, different tribes had different styles of carving. Some carved with bold, deep cuts, while others carved shallow cuts and looked delicate. Some large poles were very expensive and took two to three years to carve. Sometimes a family would spend all the money they had for the honor of having a pole.

Some of the animal figures used by the Northwest Indians were:

Mountain Goat: His spirit gives kindness, good humor, and fairness. Also, his follower was given power to be a good climber, fleet of foot, and a good hunter of mountain animals.

Beaver: (called Tsing by the Haida) A very important figure. Could give power for healing and to change snow or cold weather into rain or mist by chanting his song. After contact with fur traders he became a symbol of fur wealth.

Cormorant: A helping spirit to fishermen, giving skill in spearing salmon.

Killer Whale: Highly honored because the killer whale was seen as a strong and brave animal that was able to kill whales. The killer whale could change form and become a human with great power.

Eagle: Gives his follower skill as a hunter of all animals with good eyesight and hearing. Eagle also warns of coming enemies and is an important clan crest. His beak always points down.

Grizzly Bear: Was a very popular spirit because of his great strength and could help women become industrious and good mothers and help men become good hunters. Grizzly bear usually is shown with his tongue sticking out.

Thunderbird: He is the messenger of "He who dwells above" and carries out creating things, such as other spirits, water, earth, etc. He is one of the most powerful figures. When Thunderbird flies his flapping wings cause thunder and lightening flashes out of his mouth. He lives in the highest mountains and eats killer whales and sharks.

It is not possible to completely read or understand a pole without knowing the owner's story, but it is usually possible to identify the animal figures.

The colors that coastal Indians used before the European's arrival were mostly:

red - made from hematite stone

bluegreen - made from copper ore

black - made from coal, graphite and charcoal

white - made from white clay

Painting was done with brushes made from various sizes of hair, usually porcupine, tied onto a handle of wood. Because more paints and colors are now available, totem poles made today may have a wider variety of colors.

Totem Poles can be seen in these Seattle-Tacoma locations:

A) Burke Museum - University of Washington Campus

B) Highline Community College - Midway, Washington

C) Pioneer Square - downtown Seattle

D) West Seattle View Park - Seattle

E) Tacoma Historical Museum - Tacoma

F) Tacoma View Park - Tacoma

G) Point Defiance Park - Tacoma

DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING A TOTEM POLE

You can make a model of a totem pole using authentic crests found on the following pages. Your teacher can duplicate them on tagboard and you can choose the crests you like best. Color them with the traditional colors of red, black, bluegreen and white. Cut the crests out and paste them, one on top of another, onto a large piece of paper.

You can create a story that your totem pole tells. You may want to read The Talking Totem Pole by Lurline Mayol or see the film "Legend of the Magic Knives" (Encyclopedia Brittanica Educational Films) to give you some ideas. A story written by a sixth grade student is shown as a sample. You can put your totem poles and your stories up on your classroom bulletin board so everyone can see them.

SAMPLE TOTEM POLE STORY

Running Stream

FAMILY NAME

TOP CREST: Mountain Goat

STORY BEHIND CREST:

Long ago another tribe invaded our land. One night a young man saw a mountain goat in his dreams. He told us and we fled up the mountain. Ever since we have lived in the mountains.

MIDDLE CREST: Bear

STORY BEHIND CREST:

Also during this dream he saw a bear on their side. Suddenly it shrank. In his mind he asked how they would lose their strength. It told him to place rocks around his dwelling. This helped us to get up the mountain.

BOTTOM CREST: Beaver

STORY BEHIND CREST:

Once we arrived on the mountain, we didn't know how we would survive. An older woman saw a beaver digging up a plant. We survived on this edible plant for some time.

TOTEM POLE STORY

_____

FAMILY NAME

TOP CREST: _____

STORY BEHIND CREST: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SECOND CREST: _____

STORY BEHIND CREST: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THIRD CREST: _____

STORY BEHIND CREST: _____

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BOTTOM CREST: _____

STORY BEHIND CREST: _____

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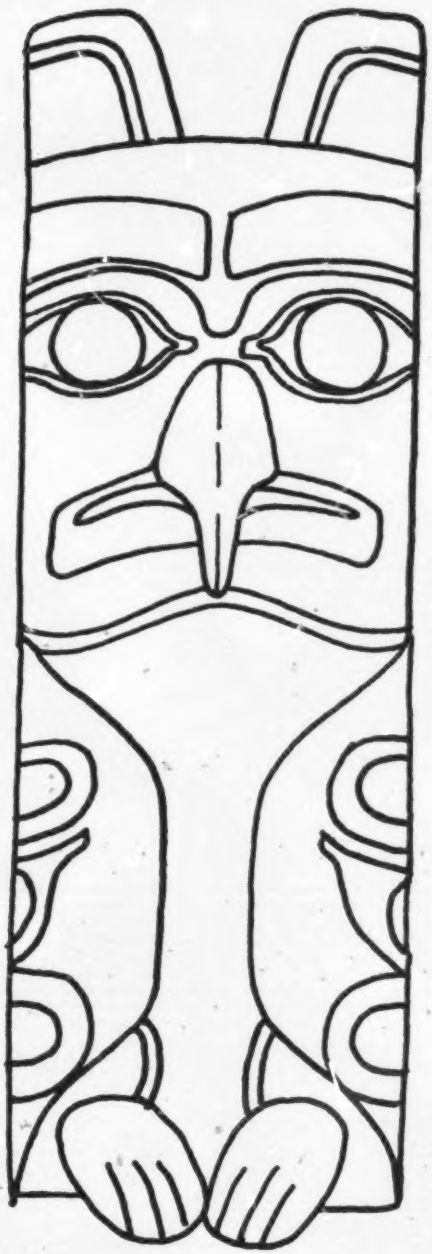
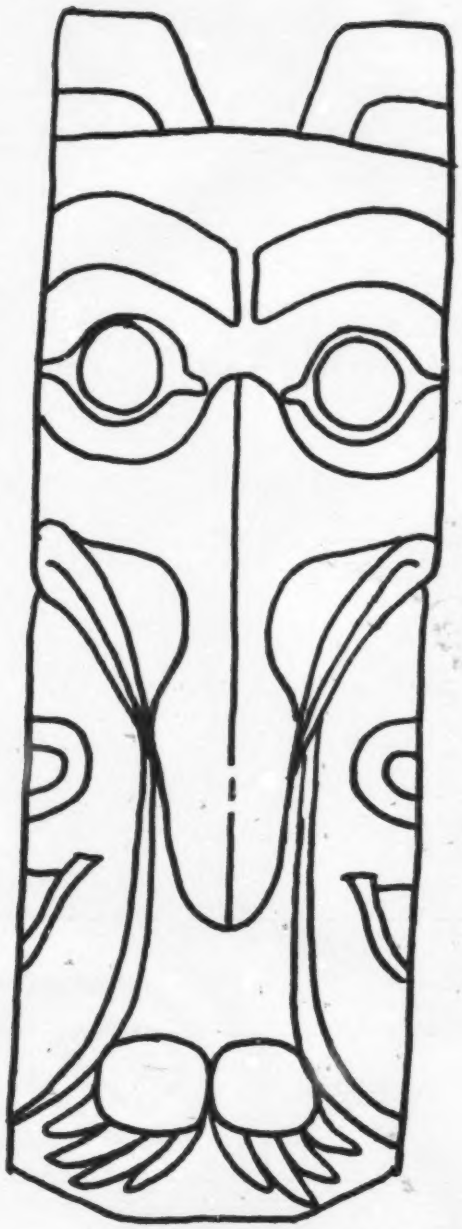
KILLER WHALE



EAGLE

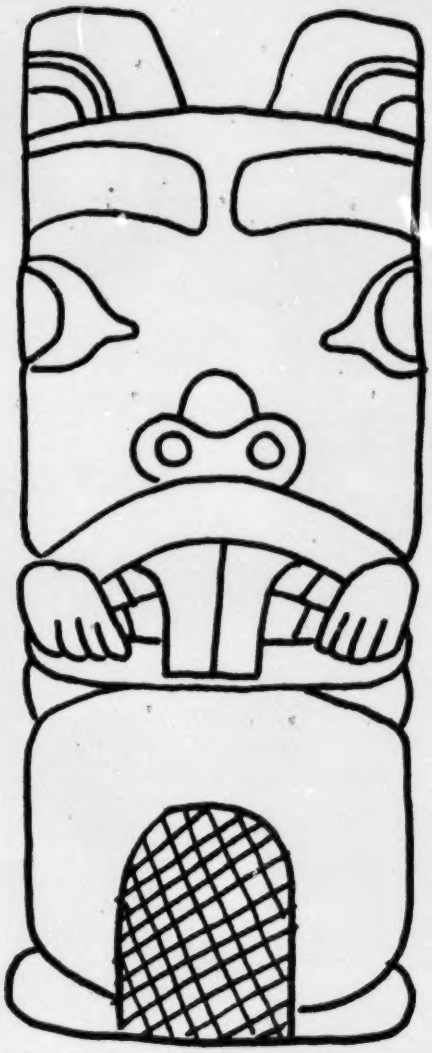
DUPLICATE ON TAGBOARD AND USE WITH TOTEM POLE ART ACTIVITY



CORMORANT

MOUNTAIN GOAT

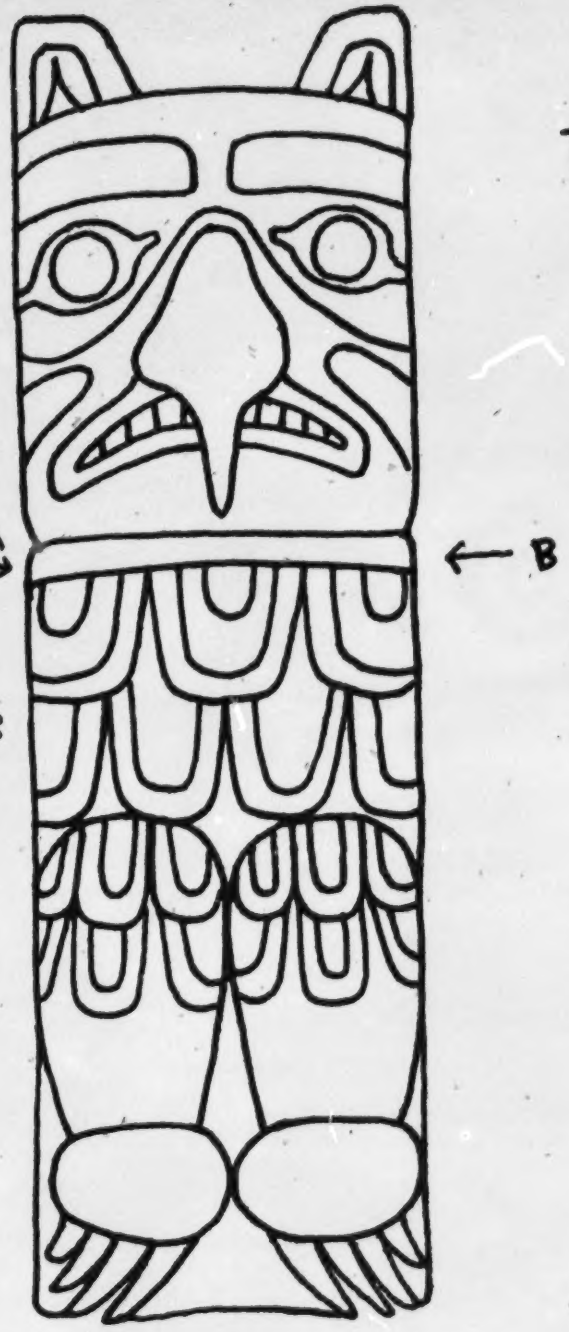
DUPLICATE ON TAGBOARD AND USE WITH TOTEM POLE ART ACTIVITY



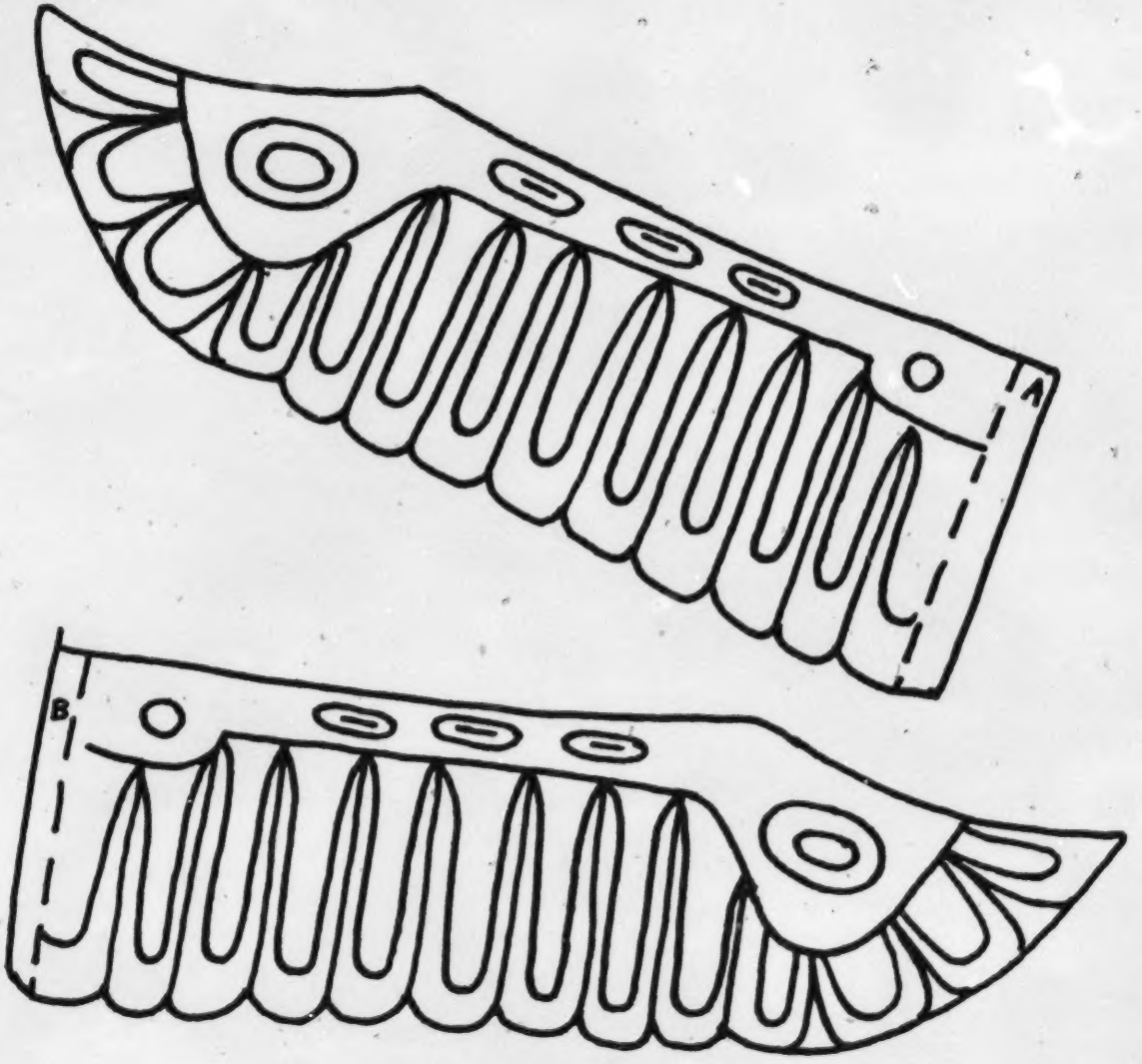
BEAVER

BEAR

DUPLICATE ON TAGBOARD AND USE WITH TOTEM POLE ART ACTIVITY



THUNDERBIRD AND WINGS



DUPLICATE ON TAGBOARD AND USE WITH TOTEM POLE ART ACTIVITY

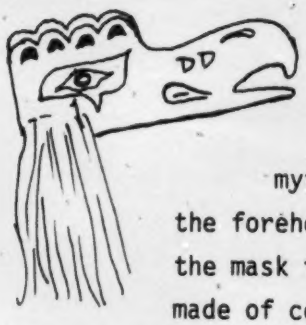
THE STORY OF THE TOTEM POLE IN PIONEER SQUARE, SEATTLE

This totem pole was brought from Tongas Island, Alaska and placed in Pioneer Square in 1897. It has been carved out of a cedar log and is 60 feet high.

To understand the meaning of the crests on the pole, it is necessary to understand something about the Tlingit People. They are divided into two main clans, the Wolf and the Raven. From these two main clans, there are over eighty branches which are found along the Pacific Coast from Alaska to British Columbia. Annihoots the brown bear, Chak the eagle, Orca the whale, and many other animals and fish belong to the Wolf Clan. Porpoise, Frog, and many other animals and fish belong to the Raven Clan.

The carved figures on this pole tell a family history dating back seven generations. Beginning with the top of the pole, there is a raven with a herring in its beak. The raven represents the family clan of the chief who had this totem pole carved. The herring in the raven's beak shows that the herring was a good food source for these people. The next figure on the pole is a human figure who represents the medicine man of the village. He was a member of the Frog subclan, as shown by the frog he is holding. The third figure from the top represents the ancestors of the chief who had the pole carved and signify that he belonged to the Frog subclan. The fourth figure is Annihoots, the bear. The large size of the bear shows that the chief he represents was a highly-respected man in his generation. The fifth figure is the Eagle, which is a member of the Wolf clan. The fighting attitude of the eagle shows that the chief he represents won many battles in his time. The sixth figure represents the blackfish, a member of the whale family. The blackfish was the clan crest of the chief who was the leader during this generation and is a subclan of the Wolf Clan. The human face which appears just forward of the top fin signifies that this chief had captured slaves in raids on other tribes. The seal in the jaws of the blackfish means that the family of this chief always had plenty of seal meat to eat.

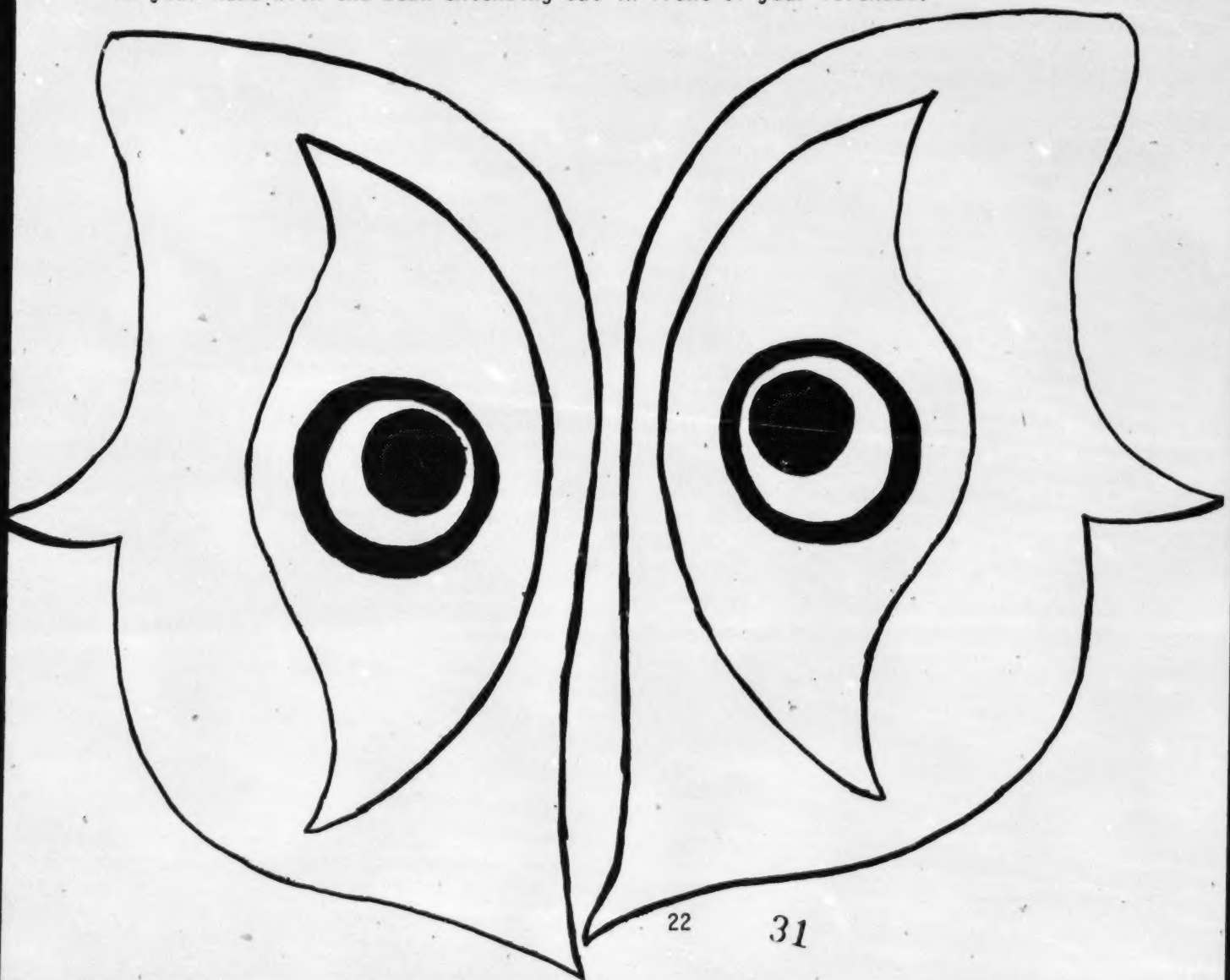
The seventh and last figure on the pole is another eagle, which represents the earliest ancestor of this line of chiefs. The oval-shaped figure on the side of the head represents an egg and shows that the Eagle clan are a great people and will have many more descendants to follow.



CROOKED-BEAK-OF-HEAVEN MASK

This is a mask from the Kwakiutl people. It represents a mythical bird and is used in the hamatsa dance. It is worn on the forehead at an upward angle, with the beak in front and the rest of the mask fitting on the head like a hat. The fringe, which is usually made of cedarbark, hangs down and covers part of the face.

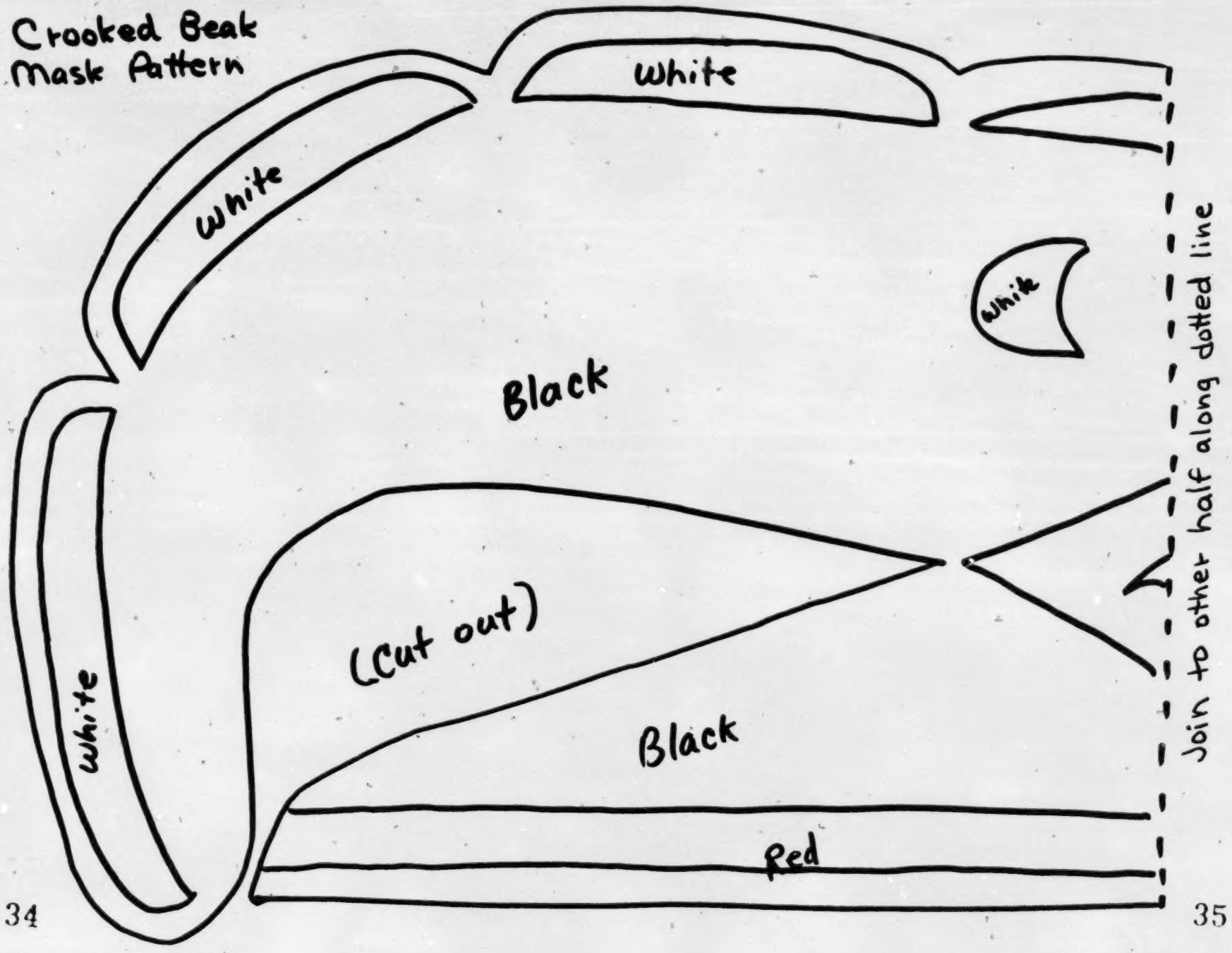
A pattern for this mask is on the next two pages. Put the two pattern pieces together and trace around it on black construction paper. Cut out <u>two</u> of these and turn one over so it faces the other way. This will make a <u>right</u> side and a <u>left</u> side of the mask. Paste on the colored parts using red and white paper. Paste on the eyes (below). Add fringe to the back part made from raffia or thin strips of brown paper. Staple the two sides of the mask together at the back and along the beak, leaving a space to fit over your head. Put the mask on your head with the beak extending out in front of your forehead.

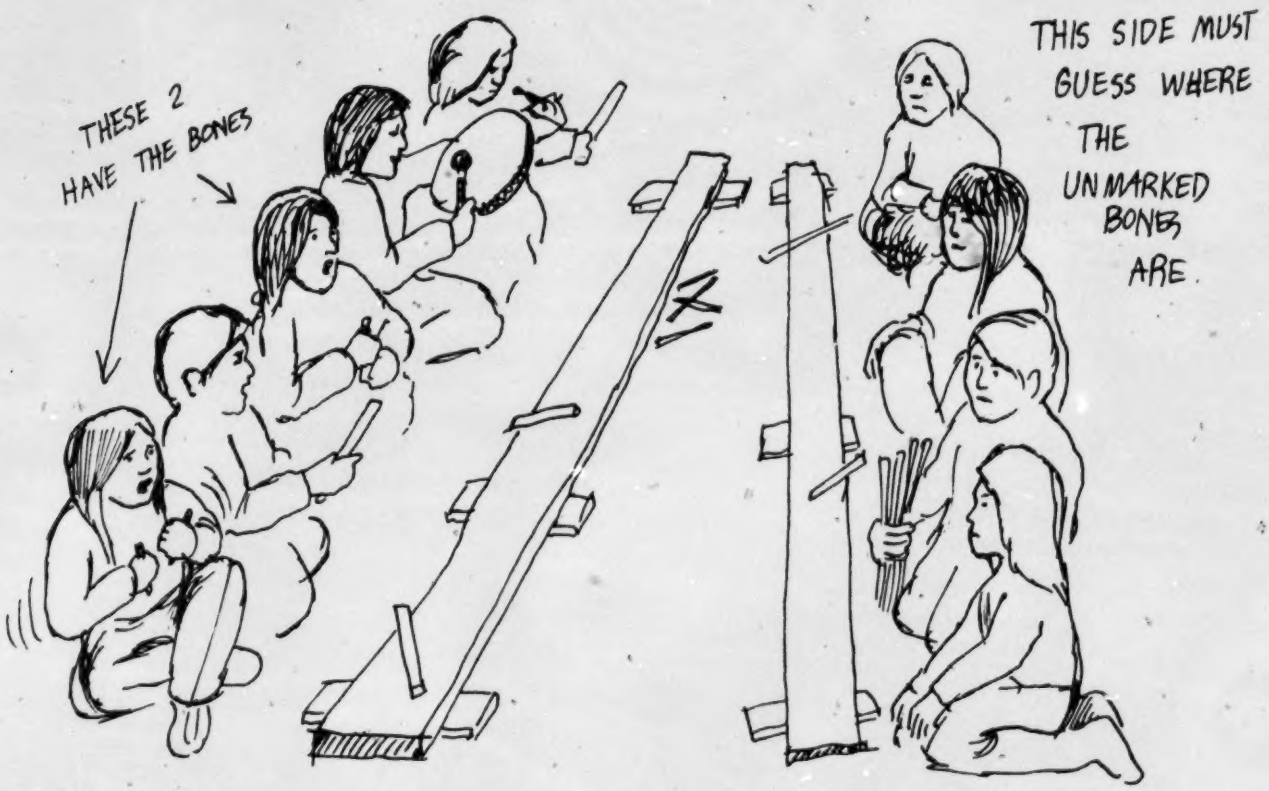


Crooked-Beak-Of-Heaven
Mask Pattern

32

33


Crooked Beak
Mask Pattern
White
White
White
Black
(Cut out)
White
Black
Red
Join to other half along dotted line



The game of slahal (slah-HALL) is sometimes also called the bone game or the stick game. It was played by most coastal tribes and is still played today. It is usually played outdoors in the summer. The players sit on the ground in two lines, facing each other. Each side selects a leader. The leader has two pairs of bones. One pair is marked with black bands around the center. The other pair is plain, with no marks. The object of the game is to guess the location of the unmarked bones. There are also ten tally sticks plus one more which is called the kick stick or king stick. These sticks are used to keep score.

The leader starts the game by leading his group in song. He chooses two people who will hold the two pairs of bones. They hide their hands as they switch the bones around. The singing is accompanied by a drum and by sticks which the players pound on boards lying on the ground in front of them. The chanting continues as the players with the bones hold them in their fists so that the center part (where the black bands are) cannot be seen and move their fists back and forth in time to the music. Then the leader motions for the singing and the movement to stop. The leader on the opposing team now tries to guess where the <u>unmarked</u> bones are. He uses a set of hand signals to guess (see next page). Each time he guesses incorrectly, he must throw one of his sticks to the opposition. The kick stick is the last stick to be given up.

When the leader has guessed where both the unmarked bones are, the bones are given to his team. He now chooses two players to hold the bones on his team, and the games continues as before. When one team has lost all of the tally sticks to the other side, the game is over.

both UNMARKED bones
to the left

I guess both
UNMARKED bones
to the left

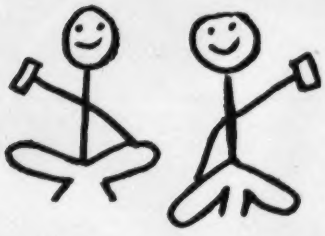
both UNMARKED bones
to the right

I guess both
UNMARKED bones
to the right

both UNMARKED bones
to the "inside"

I guess both UNMARKED
bones to the "inside"

both UNMARKED bones
to the "outside"



I guess both UNMARKED
bones to the "outside"

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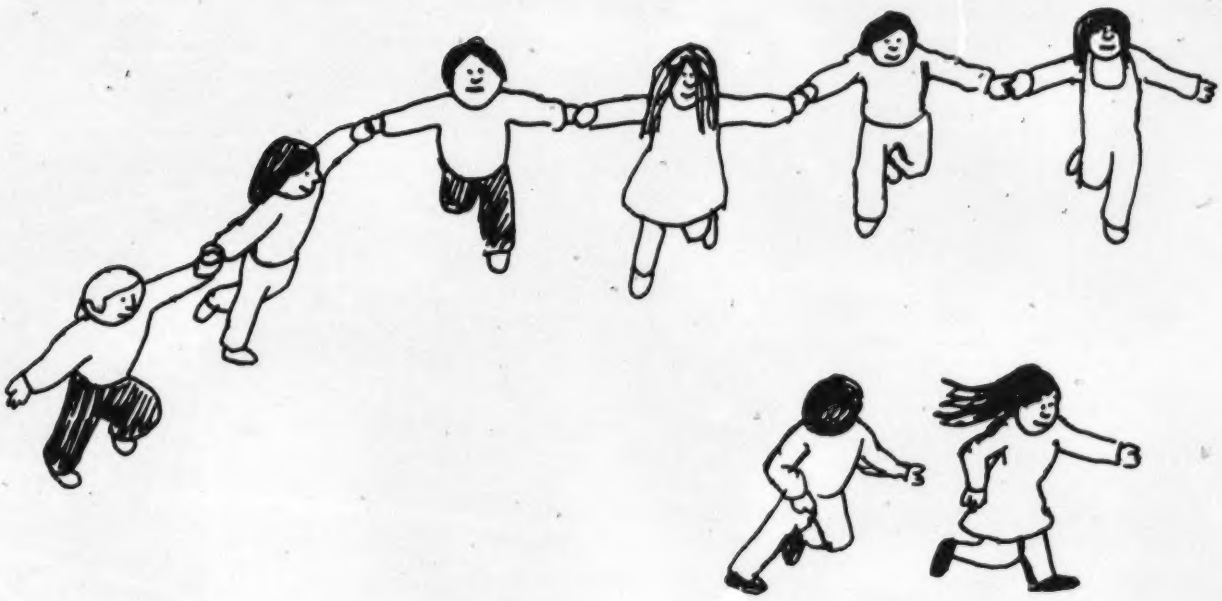
FISH TRAP - Northwest Coast Game
8 to 16 Players

This game was played by native children of all ages. There could be anywhere from four to twelve "fishermen" and one to three "fish". Some groups liked to play this fish-netting game with only one fish to be netted, since they considered it more fun. The fishermen joined hands; the fish was given about a 20-foot start, and the game was on. The fish ran and doubled and dodged in an effort to escape from being caught in the trap.

This was not as difficult as it seemed because the individual fishermen could neither touch nor trip the fish. A catch was made only when the two ends of the trap met with the fish inside, at which point the fish gave up without any attempt to break out of or dodge under the net.



EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Briefly describe this culture area in your own words. Include food, clothing, shelter, and art.

2. Name three tribes from this culture area.

3. In what part of the United States is this culture area located?

4. Tell one way in which this culture area is <u>different</u> from another one you have studied.

5. What was the Chinook Jargon? Write a word in Chinook Jargon.

6. Explain what happened at a potlatch.

7. What is the first salmon ceremony?

8. Name three crests that are often found on totem poles.

9. What colors were used on the totem poles of long ago?

10. Tell three ways in which the cedar tree was used by the Coastal people.